

IN HONOR OF MRS. MARY BALL
MORTON

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Mary Ball Morton upon her retirement after 28 years of dedicated service working for the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families.

The Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families mission is to provide and manage a range of services for children who have experienced abandonment, abuse, mental illness, neglect, or substance abuse. Its services include prevention, early intervention, assessment, treatment, permanency, and after care. The Department attracts and retains proud and talented individuals who are motivated to "Think of the Child First" in all that they do.

Mrs. Morton has been an inspiring example of a person who "thinks of the child first" all of her professional life. Mrs. Morton's distinguished career has had many different facets, yet they all reflect back to a person who has been steadfastly dedicated to improving the lives of children. Initially, Mrs. Morton worked to develop foster care policy, and ensure that the foster care throughout the State was adequate and working to improve and enrich children's lives. During Mrs. Morton's career, she has overseen the administration of the State of Delaware's adoption program, court liaison services, quality assurance and improvement programs.

Mrs. Morton's commitment to children is constant; now that Mrs. Morton is retiring from State employment, she is focusing her energy and support on the 21st Century Fund for Delaware's Children. The 21st Century Fund for Delaware's Children will provide a critical bridge between the limited resources of State and non-profit agencies and underserved children by supporting activities that will help children develop socially and academically.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to wish Mrs. Morton success in all her future endeavors, and I would like to thank her for her years of dedicated advocacy and for her years of personal friendship.

INTRODUCING DR. SHELLEY
SEKULA-GIBBS

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to introduce and welcome Dr. SHELLEY SEKULA-GIBBS, the newly elected Member of Congress from the 22nd Congressional District who will be sworn in tonight.

Dr. SEKULA-GIBBS is a 5th generation Texan and a medical doctor and teacher. Tonight, she will make history when she becomes the first female physician to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

She has dedicated herself to serving the citizens of Houston for several years. Before her election, she served for three terms as an

At-Large member of the Houston City council. In that role, she helped advance property tax reform and strengthen the city's police force. She also helped found the Ellington Field Task Force, which kept Ellington Field open and operating as a Joint Reserve Base.

She has also volunteered countless hours to serve the citizens of south Texas. She served as a volunteer medical doctor and teacher at the Baylor College of Medicine, she shapes the next generation of healers.

She helped found the Provider Health Network, a group that cares for uninsured patients. As president of the "Healthy Houston Foundation" she raised money for clinics that provide medical care to the needy. She has also volunteered her time to take care of our Nation's veterans in several Veterans Hospitals across the Nation.

As a businesswoman and community leader, Dr. SEKULA-GIBBS has brought together municipalities, organizations, and businesses to create jobs and economic development in the south Texas region. She understands the importance of reforming our current tax code and reducing our debt.

As a founding member of the Sylvan Rodriguez Foundation—an organization that provides students in the Houston area with the opportunity to study space, medicine, and science—she is committed to advancing America's technological and scientific leadership. As a mother and grandmother, she also understands the importance of strengthening families and communities.

While Dr. SEKULA-GIBBS will be sworn in today, she will only be with us in Washington for a short time. She had a very successful special election—she received over 77,000 votes en route to victory. She ran a good campaign for the 110th Congress, but she faced many difficult procedural challenges.

Despite her short run, the future looks bright for Dr. SEKULA-GIBBS. I look forward to working with her in the final weeks of this Congress, and I wish her the best of luck in the future.

A TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSMAN
JAMES CLYBURN

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, in the past I have often had the delight of saluting my departing colleagues with a tribute in Rap poetry. At this point, however, circumstances have been reversed and I am departing. As I leave it will be my pleasure to offer some brief portraits in words describing the very able women and men I leave behind. I would like to begin with JIM CLYBURN. I visited his State on two different occasions and I was impressed by the fact that everyone had very strong opinions about JIM. They either feared him or they admired him. That is one sign of true greatness. The composite opinion of JIM which emerged was one of a great conciliator, a leader with a keen understanding of the fact that politics is the art of compromise but the compromise must always be an honorable and productive one.

A lighthearted summary of JIM's special assets is reflected in the following Rap poem.

MISTER JIM

With a bounty of transportation bucks
Freshman Clyburn showed he was clever;
All the South Carolina clubhouse boys
Danced Dixie up and down
Cheering Mister Jim and diversity forever.
Mister Jim
Made Mister Charlie look cheap,
Sowing his seeds of sunburned charm
A lots more dollars
Congressman Clyburn managed to reap.
Before he agrees to negotiate
Mister Jim dangles the right bait;
From smoke filled rooms
He emerges with fat surprises;
Mister Jim
Never despises compromises.
Mister Jim rescued
Bill Clinton's Black politics career;
When affirmative action fumbling
was about to end it
Mister Jim talked to Bubba
And convinced him to merely mend it.
Mr. Jim can display
Warm understanding affectionate appeal
But the world is a better place
Cause Mister Jim
Knows how and when to deal.

TRIBUTE TO ANTHONY ZAGAMI

HON. NICK J. RAHALL, II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Anthony J. "Tony" Zagami, a true public servant who will retire from the U.S. Government Printing Office at the end of this year.

I have known Tony since the mid-1960s, when I was an intern in the office of Senator ROBERT C. BYRD, D-WV, and Tony was a Senate page. Over the years, Tony has been a great friend to me, to my family and to the people of West Virginia, and he will certainly be missed here in the legislative branch.

However, let no one argue that Tony has not earned his retirement. After spending 25 years working for the U.S. Congress, Tony left Capitol Hill to become the General Counsel of the GPO. When he departs at the end of the year, he will have set a record as the GPO's longest-serving General Counsel.

Throughout his career, both here on the Hill and at the GPO, Tony was known for his dedication and commitment to public service. He has been the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions for outstanding performance and achievement.

I thank Tony for his outstanding service and for his friendship over years. The qualities he embodies are getting harder and harder to find nowadays.

May God bless this admirable man and his family as he begins his next chapter.

TRIBUTE TO BUCK O'NEIL

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Buck O'Neil, an internationally renowned, distinguished Kansas Citian, who died on October 6th at the age of 94.

John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil was born the grandson of slaves in Carrabelle, Florida, on November 13, 1911. He acquired his love for baseball at a young age from his father, who played for the local team when he wasn't working as a foreman in the celery fields. As a teenager, Buck realized that he wanted to do something more with his life, but times were difficult throughout the country during the Great Depression, and he had received little formal education because the local high school was segregated.

When his father told him that, "There is something better, but you can't get it here, you're gonna have to go someplace else," Buck made the decision to try his luck as a baseball player in the semi-professional barnstorming leagues that traveled the entire country. It didn't take him long to attract the attention of the Memphis Red Sox of the Negro American League, who signed him to his first professional contract in 1937. After a year of playing for the Red Sox, Mr. O'Neil's contract was purchased by the Kansas City Monarchs—the team with which he would spend the rest of his playing career.

The Monarchs were the most successful team in the history of the Negro Leagues, winning the most titles and producing the best players. While playing for Kansas City, Mr. O'Neil won batting titles in 1940 and 1946 and led his team to a convincing victory in the 1942 Negro World Series. He batted .353 as the Monarchs swept the Homestead Grays, 4–0. He was also selected to play in three Negro American League All-Star Games, and would likely have accomplished more during his playing career had it not been for World War II; Mr. O'Neil dutifully served his country for 2 years by completing a tour in the United States Navy from 1943–1945.

Buck stayed with the Monarchs through the end of the 1955 season, serving both as a player and as the team's manager for the final 8 years of his time in Kansas City, all the while facing the harshness of separation and discrimination in a country that was still segregated. Thanks in part to the significant accomplishments of his Monarchs teammate Jackie Robinson, who broke down racial barriers by joining the Brooklyn Dodgers of Major League Baseball in 1947, Buck too was able to join a rapidly-integrating MLB as a scout for the Chicago Cubs. In 1962, he became the first African American coach in the Majors. During his storied career with the Cubs, Mr. O'Neil was responsible for the development of many great major leaguers, like Joe Carter, and he also signed two future Hall of Fame players—Lou Brock and Ernie Banks. After 33 years with the Cubs, Buck returned home in 1988 to scout for the Kansas City Royals.

Despite his myriad accomplishments on the field as a player, manager, and coach, it is Buck O'Neil's accomplishments off the field that demonstrate his love for the game of baseball and his commitment to the essential role that the Negro Leagues played in the integration of both American sport and American society. In 1990, O'Neil was a leader in the effort to create the Negro League Baseball Museum in Kansas City, Missouri. The Museum, located in the historic 18th and Vine district of downtown Kansas City, has excelled for nearly a decade in its mission of educating all Americans about the rich and important history of the Negro Leagues. Buck served as the Board Chairman for the Museum and actively pro-

moted its messages of understanding and triumph over adversity. In addition to his work with the Museum, Mr. O'Neil served as a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame Veterans Committee from 1981–2000, working hard to ensure that many of the Negro League players who had been denied entrance into the Major Leagues because of segregation were able to gain a deserved entrance into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

After devoting so many years of his life to promoting the accomplishments of others, many believed that the time for Buck's recognition had finally arrived in the spring of 2006, when he was on a special ballot for entry into the Hall of Fame. Shockingly, the Committee chose not to induct Mr. O'Neil, to the dismay of many—but not Buck. Unaffected by the Hall's decision, he took the high road and offered to speak at the induction ceremony on behalf of those selected, because many of them had passed on. On June 30, 2006, Buck selflessly honored all 17 individuals related to the Negro Leagues who were inducted, giving an inspiring speech and instructing all audience members to hold hands and join him in song. The ovation he received was the loudest and longest of the ceremony.

At the time of his death, Buck O'Neil's efforts were focused on the John "Buck" O'Neil Education and Research Center. Scheduled for completion in late 2007, the Center will be an expansion of the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum devoted to teaching people of all ages many different aspects of the Negro leagues and baseball. The 45,000 square foot facility will house extensive archives and promises to devote much of its space and funding to state-of-the-art technology and programs that will teach many different things to many different people.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to honor the life of Buck O'Neil, because of his accomplishments while playing and managing in the Negro and Major Leagues, because of his work with the Negro League Baseball Museum, because of his devotion to those who shared in his struggle, valuing their legacies more than his own, and most of all, because of his immense contributions to the game of baseball and American society. When acclaimed documentary filmmaker Ken Burns made his film *Baseball* in 1994, he chose Buck O'Neil as the narrator, because no other individual better captures the history and legacy of our American pastime. He was truly the game's ambassador, and his spirit will be sorely missed.

A TRIBUTE TO PAUL DE LA GARZA

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2006

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Paul de la Garza, a hard charging newspaper reporter for The St. Petersburg Times with a generous heart of gold who died on October 29, 2006.

Many of our colleagues worked with Paul as he reported on stories affecting our national security and the health care of our country's veterans. Paul was an outstanding investigative reporter who mined his many sources to

effect necessary changes in the way in which we deliver medical care at our Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers. He also spent time earlier this summer in Iraq as he did extensive reporting on the war there and the role U.S. Central Command plays in managing our troops on the ground.

Paul was more than a reporter though. He was first and foremost an outstanding husband to his wife Georgia and a loving father to his two children Monica, 12, and Carlos, 11, both of whom he adopted from Mexico.

His is the story of the American dream, growing up poor in a small Texas town. He worked 40 hour weeks as a fourth grader to help out his family. Later he delivered newspapers and waited tables to put himself through college at the University of Texas. He was a reporter with the Associated Press and Chicago Tribune before becoming a regular on the front pages of The St. Petersburg Times as a reporter in the Washington and Tampa bureaus.

Following my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I would like to include tributes to Paul from The St. Petersburg Times, The Tampa Tribune and The Chicago Tribune. They speak to Paul's success as a reporter but more importantly his compassion and love for his family, his friends, and for those most in need of help.

Mr. Speaker, I knew Paul de la Garza as a reporter, but I will forever miss him as a very special friend who always kept life's priorities in order. My prayers go out to Paul's family, especially to Georgia, Monica and Carlos, as they deal with the loss of a great man, a great husband and a great father.

[From the St. Petersburg Times, Oct. 30, 2006]

PASSIONATE REPORTER "NEVER MET A STRANGER"

Paul de la Garza, a hard-driving St. Petersburg Times reporter whose passion for the big story was matched by love of family, died Sunday (Oct. 29, 2006) after an apparent heart attack.

Mr. de la Garza, 44, who had survived a heart attack 2 years ago, collapsed at his Davis Islands home about 10 a.m. after complaining of chest pains. He was taken by ambulance to Tampa General Hospital, where he died about 1 p.m.

As a journalist, Mr. de la Garza was widely respected for mining sources and breaking big stories, most recently about VA hospitals and the Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base.

"He was a driving investigative reporter. This is very shocking," said U.S. Rep. C.W. Bill Young, a frequent source for Mr. de la Garza, sometimes dinner companion and occasional target. "He was very respected by the folks I know. They trusted him."

Young's wife, Beverly, recalled tears running down de la Garza's face, as she led him through VA wards full of wounded soldiers.

"Paul is really compassionate. He really cares," she said Sunday. "He's the most wonderful Democrat I ever knew. I can't believe this has happened to him and Georgia and the kids. This is wrong."

TEXAS UPBRINGING

Mr. de la Garza was born in Port Isabel, Texas, near Brownsville, one of six children.

His father was a shrimp and his heritage was Mexican, though he sometimes pointed out that some ancestors lived in Texas before the United States annexed it. His given name was Jesus Pablo, but friends called him Jesus only when they wanted to annoy him.

By fourth grade, he was working 40 hours a week, collecting bait for fishermen, his wife, Georgia, said.